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SUBJECT: NINEWA: NON-TRADITIONAL IDPS PULLED FROM MANY
SIDES

SECSTATE FOR USAID

Classified By: Ninewa PRT Team Leader Jason Hyland: 1.4 (B) and (D).

This is a Ninewa Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) message.

Summary

1. (C) Management of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is a significant issue facing Ninewa, which contains the second largest IDP population in Iraq. There is one formal camp and a few concentrated settlements; however, the majority of IDPs are spread throughout the ethnic communities in this northern province. IDPs face difficulties acquiring basic services and support, and are sometimes perceived to cause a security concern for the communities in which they settle. IDPs are players in the political struggle between Kurds and Arabs; the final status of the province's IDPs could have a significant effect on the resolution of disputed territories through the Article 140 process. For example, the proposed building by the Dahuk governor of a new camp in the northern Ninewa district of Tal Kaif is widely suspected to be a power grab and has met locally with significant resistance.

IDPs in Ninewa

2. (C) The Government of Iraq's (GOI) Ministry of Displacement and Migration (MoDM) is currently tracking approximately 12,118 displaced families (66,924 individuals) in Ninewa. The majority are located in the city of Mosul and its suburbs. (Note: Though these numbers reflect only those IDPs registered with MoDM, there is no evidence of a significantly larger number of unregistered IDPs. End note.) The only "tent camp" is in the district of Aqrah with less than 100 families. (Note: Aqrah is a traditionally Sunni Arab district transferred to the province of Dohuk after the establishment of the northern no-fly zone. End note.) The single largest concentration of IDPs in Ninewa is the Herki Kurds outside Bartalah (reftel). Another large group is in the old Azadi military camp near the Tal Kaif border with Dahuk in Faida.

3. (C) Most IDPs in Ninewa Province do not live in camps, but instead settle in existing communities, either inhabiting abandoned military facilities, schools, hotels or other buildings or moving in with friends and family. (Note: After the massive August 14 bombings in Qahtaniya sub-district, tents provided by the GOI and international community went largely unused. People preferred to stay with family and friends in permanent structures within their ethnic community. End Note.) Most IDPs in Ninewa typically experience difficulty obtaining employment and food rations,

as well as problems accessing health care and educational facilities due to their status.

IDP Solutions -- A Short Road to Nowhere

14. (C) MoDM policy is to encourage IDPs to return to their original homes as the best permanent solution for displaced persons. This policy would require over one-third of Ninewa's IDPs to return to Baghdad, an unlikely proposition under current conditions. Other IDPs originated in Mosul and migrated 30-80 km to the predominantly Christian areas east of the city for security reasons. These IDPs are largely safe and well-integrated into their communities.

15. (C) In Sunni-Arab dominated western Ninewa and Mosul itself, there is pressure for IDPs to return to their areas of origin, as they are sometimes perceived to be security threats to the communities in which they settled, either out of fear of making the community more of a target or that the IDPs are terrorists themselves. Another problem for IDPs in western Ninewa is the resolution through the Article 140 process of disputed areas; settled populations view IDPs suspiciously due to the legacy in Ninewa of demographic manipulation for political reasons. This history makes certain western Ninewa populations and political parties more likely to reject the presence of IDP populations in their communities if they fear it would sway the Article 140 referendum.

New IDP Camp Seen as Political Move

16. (SBU) The Dohuk Government has proposed the building of a
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sizable new IDP camp in the Tal Kaif district, in northern Ninewa, to support an approximate population of 825 families. Construction would also include such support institutions as schools, medical treatment facilities and administrative offices. The proposal has been approved by the Ninewa Governor and Vice Governor and forwarded to the Central Government for consideration. Curiously, there is no IDP population currently identified for residence in this proposed camp. Because of this and its origin from Dohuk's governor, local communities speculate that the camp is an attempt to alter local demographics in preparation for Article 140; the camp has met with some local resistance.

Comment

17. (C) IDPs exist in Ninewa, although many of these populations are not in the traditional "IDP camps." The solutions to IDP issues in Ninewa are driven by many competing interests, from security to politics. The PRT will continue to monitor IDPs in Ninewa and provide assistance and guidance as the process to integrate or return these populations moves forward.
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